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SHERBORNE URBAN DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

*Dorsel*

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
FOR THE YEAR  
1956



Medical Officer of Health -

NOEL F. PEARSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector -

C. E. BEAN, M.S.I.A., A.R.S.H.



Council Offices,  
STURMINSTER NEWTON,  
Dorset.

1st June 1957.

To the Chairman and Members,  
Sherborne Urban District Council.

Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1956.

The report is prepared and will be circulated in accordance with the requirements of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations 1935 and 1951.

The report shows that the health of the district has remained satisfactory during the year. Measles was prevalent throughout the year, but there was no outbreak of more serious communicable disease. From the vital statistics it will be seen that although slightly higher than last year, the comparative birth rate of 12.3 is still below the rate of 15.7 for the Country as a whole, whilst the comparative death rate is higher than last year and the national rate.

It is satisfactory to note that during the past four years there has been no death attributable to pregnancy or childbirth.

I am indebted to Mr. Bean, your Senior Public Health Inspector, for his co-operation and help during the year, and for his assistance in preparing this report. I am also indebted to my clerk, Mrs. P. Dyas, for her efficient services.

I would also like to thank you, Madam and Gentlemen, for your courtesy and consideration throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

*Leslie Stranra*

Medical Officer of Health.



SHERBORNE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
FOR THE YEAR

1 9 5 6.

A. Area - 1,650 acres.

Rateable value: 1st April 1956 - £92,302; 1st April 1957 - £95,654.

Production of a penny rate: 1956/57 - £364; 1957/58 - £323 (estimated).

Vital Statistics.

Population (Registrar General's Estimate) - 7,280.

LIVE BIRTHS.

|              | <u>Male.</u> | <u>Female.</u> |                  | Comparative Rates  |                     |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|              |              |                |                  | (a) Sherborne U.D. | (b) England & Wales |
| Total        | 37           | 34             | ) Rate per 1,000 |                    |                     |
| Legitimate   | 35           | 32             | ) resident pop:  |                    |                     |
| Illegitimate | 2            | 2              | ) = 9.7          | 12.3               | 15.7                |

STILLBIRTHS.

|       |   |   |                                                |      |      |
|-------|---|---|------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| Total | 2 | 2 | Rate per 1,000<br>live & stillbirths<br>= 56.3 | 56.3 | 23.0 |
|-------|---|---|------------------------------------------------|------|------|

DEATHS.

|       |    |    |                                           |      |      |
|-------|----|----|-------------------------------------------|------|------|
| Total | 43 | 45 | Rate per 1,000<br>resident pop:<br>= 13.4 | 12.9 | 11.7 |
|-------|----|----|-------------------------------------------|------|------|

|                                        |     |     |                                                           |     |      |
|----------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|
| Deaths in<br>infants under<br>one year | Nil | Nil | Infantile death<br>rate per 1,000<br>live births<br>= Nil | Nil | 24.5 |
|----------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|

|                               | <u>1956.</u> | <u>1955.</u> | <u>1954.</u> | <u>1953.</u> |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Deaths from Maternal Causes   | - Nil        | Nil          | Nil          | Nil          |
| " " Tuberculosis              | - Nil        | 2            | 1            | Nil          |
| " " Cancer of the Lungs       | - 1          | 5            | 1            | 2            |
| " " Coronary Disease (Angina) | - 11         | 5            | 9            | 8            |
| " " Influenza                 | - 2          | 1            | Nil          | 4            |
| " " Pneumonia                 | - 4          | 7            | 3            | 4            |
| " " Motor vehicle accidents   | - Nil        | Nil          | Nil          | 1            |
| " " All other accidents       | - 1          | 4            | 2            | Nil          |
| " " Suicide                   | - 1          | Nil          | Nil          | 1            |

B. Nature of the District.

Sherborne is a trading centre of an agricultural area, as well as being a tourist and educational centre. Principal industries include light engineering, glove making, dairies and silk mills.

C. Personal Health Services in the District.

The personal health services, including the ambulance service, continued to be provided by the County Council. It has not yet been possible to develop fully the County Council's Domestic Home Help Service in the District. Otherwise, the services provided have been adequate and no further comment with regard to them is considered necessary.

The Public Health Laboratory Services have proved in all respects most helpful and satisfactory.

The Yeatman Hospital (West Dorset Group Hospitals Committee) provides the local hospital requirements, both in and out patient.

D. Environmental Health Services.

SANITARY STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health (Part time) - Noel F. Pearson,  
M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

He also acts as Medical Officer of Health to four other District Councils in the North Dorset Area and as Assistant County Medical Officer to the Dorset County Council.

The time available which he has to devote to his duties with your Council is slightly more than one half day per week.

Chief Public Health Inspector (Part time) - C. E. Bean,  
M.S.I.A., A.R.S.H.

Assistant Public Health Inspector (Full time) - F. E. Raeburn, M.S.I.A.

The Chief Public Health Inspector also carries out the duties of Surveyor and Water Engineer.

The Assistant Public Health Inspector also carries out the duties of Meat Inspector.

Clerical Staff - Three clerks (part time).

WATER SUPPLY.

|          |   |              |              |              |
|----------|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Rainfall | - | <u>1954.</u> | <u>1955.</u> | <u>1956.</u> |
|          |   | 34.80 ins.   | 28.67 ins.   | 27.58 ins.   |

Regular monthly samples from each of the Council's supplies totalling 91, were submitted for bacteriological examination and a sample from each source was submitted for chemical examination. Daily testing of the supplies for residual chlorine was carried out. The fluorine content of the supplies was shown to be between 0.2 and 0.3 parts per million.

A number of private well supplies are used in the district for industrial purposes. From these supplies 23 samples of water were taken and

submitted for bacteriological examination during the year.

2,031 houses in the Urban District are provided with a water supply piped into the house. 78 houses obtain their water by means of standpipes.

#### DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Routine repairs to sewers were carried out during the year and further consideration has been given to the improvement of the existing Sewage Disposal Works.

#### PUBLIC CLEANSING.

House Refuse. The Local Authority's scheme provides for the collection of house refuse weekly and disposal by controlled tipping.

Salvage. The following amounts of salvage have been collected during the year in conjunction with regular refuse collection:-

|       |   | <u>Tons.</u> | <u>Cwts.</u> | <u>Qrs.</u> |
|-------|---|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| Paper | - | 91.          | 5.           | 3.          |
| Metal | - | 5.           | 18.          | 1.          |
| Rags  | - | 1.           | 13.          | 1.          |

Cesspool Emptying. No provision is required to be made in the district.

#### RIVERS AND STREAMS POLLUTION.

The Somerset Rivers Board, in the course of its duties, have continued to exercise close observation on the purity of the River Yeo.

#### SHOPS ACTS.

In addition to the Council's direct responsibilities under the Shops Act 1950, the Council has also had delegated to it the County Council's functions under Section 38(3) (4) and (5) of the Act.

|                                |    |
|--------------------------------|----|
| No. of inspections carried out | 14 |
| No. of defects found           | 2  |
| No. of notices served          | 2  |
| No. of notices complied with   | 2  |

#### FACTORIES ACT 1937.

|                                                                                                             | <u>No. of premises<br/>on register.</u> | <u>Inspections.</u> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|
| (i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority                        | 8                                       | 3                   |
| (ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority                    | 53                                      | 41                  |
| (iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises) | 3                                       | -                   |
| Total                                                                                                       | - 64                                    | 44                  |

## FACTORIES ACT 1937 (Continued)

|                         | No. of cases in which defects were:- |                  |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
|                         | <u>Found.</u>                        | <u>Remedied.</u> |
| Sanitary Conveniences - |                                      |                  |
| Unsuitable or defective | 5                                    | 10               |

No. of outworkers = 46.

## SMOKE ABATEMENT.

Nineteen observations were undertaken during the year, calling for informal action with regard to five premises.

## SWIMMING BATHS.

There is one private swimming bath in the district available for use by the public during part of the year. When used by the public the bath is under the control of the Local Authority and the water is chlorinated.

## MOVEABLE DWELLINGS AND CAMPING SITES.

|                                                    |          |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------|
| No. of moveable dwellings licensed during the year | <u>7</u> |
| No. of camping sites licensed in the district      | <u>2</u> |

Although one of the licensed camping sites is reasonably suitable for the use to which it is put, the other one is not satisfactory. Whilst the housing situation has been acute, use of this site has been permitted for a number of caravans, normally residential accommodation for prolonged periods.

Now that the demand for the use of such accommodation is materially reduced, this site can no longer be considered suitable for the purpose.

Consideration was again given to the establishment of a permanent caravan site adjoining Culverhayes Car Park, provided with the necessary sanitary facilities, for the temporary use of tourists passing through the district. Unfortunately, on economic grounds, it would appear that this very highly desirable development will have to be again postponed to a more appropriate time.

## VERMINOUS PREMISES.

One house was found to be bug infested on vacation. Treatment with D.D.T. spray was carried out.

## PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1949.

The duties of the District Council under The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 are carried out in the district by The North Dorset Joint Rodent Committee whose activities cover the five districts in North Dorset and the Beaminster Rural District.

The total treatments undertaken in the district during the year numbered 422. 102 infestations were reported to the Committee.

RAG FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT 1951.

There are no premises subject to registration under the above-mentioned Act within the district.

PET ANIMALS ACT 1951.

|                          |          |
|--------------------------|----------|
| No. of licensed premises | <u>1</u> |
| No. of inspections made  | <u>2</u> |

SCHOOLS (INCLUDING SCHOOL CANTEENS).

All the County Council Schools were inspected and particular attention was paid to the canteens.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACTS 1948 and 1951 - Section 47.

A case of an elderly woman of abnormal behaviour and living under grossly insanitary conditions came under consideration during the year. The case presented some difficulty in so far as it was one of those border-line cases where there is considerable doubt as to whether action under the National Assistance Acts or the Lunacy Acts is the more appropriate. Ultimately, action was appropriately taken under the Lunacy Acts for the old lady's removal to a suitable institution for her care in her own interests.

HOUSING.

Total number of houses in the district 2,109

Inspection of dwelling houses during the year -

|                                                  |           |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| No. of dwelling houses inspected during the year | <u>61</u> |
| No. of inspections made                          | <u>93</u> |

|                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| No. of informal notices served | <u>5</u> |
|--------------------------------|----------|

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| No. of informal notices complied with | <u>4</u> |
|---------------------------------------|----------|

|                                 |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| No. of statutory notices served | <u>Nil</u> |
|---------------------------------|------------|

|                                        |            |
|----------------------------------------|------------|
| No. of statutory notices complied with | <u>Nil</u> |
|----------------------------------------|------------|

|                                                                 |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| No. of houses reported under Section 11 of the Housing Act 1936 | <u>Nil</u> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------|

Action taken by the Local Authority in respect of such houses -

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| Demolition Orders made | <u>Nil</u> |
|------------------------|------------|

Undertakings accepted for -

|         |            |
|---------|------------|
| Closure | <u>Nil</u> |
|---------|------------|

|                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| Reconditioning | <u>Nil</u> |
|----------------|------------|

|              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| Other Action | <u>Nil</u> |
|--------------|------------|

|                                                           |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| No. of houses included in Clearance Areas during the year | <u>Nil</u> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------|

Slum Clearance.

As related in my Report for the year 1954, Clearance Areas comprising fifty-four houses were represented during that year. Early in 1955 the Minister confirmed the necessary Orders with the exception of one area comprising two houses on, apparently, the grounds that the two houses concerned were not, in his opinion 'unfit'.

This decision must, necessarily, seriously interfere with your proposed slum clearance programme, as your officers must have in mind the Minister's

standard of 'fitness' or otherwise, when representing houses to you for action under Section 26 of the Housing Act 1936, in order to avoid unnecessary trouble and inconvenience to the owners and occupiers of the houses concerned.

As the houses in the area (in respect of which the Minister did not confirm the Clearance Order) were clearly, in the opinion of the Council and its officers 'unfit' within the meaning of Section 9 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954, your officers are handicapped not knowing which houses to represent in the future.

As a result, no further representations under your Slum Clearance programme were made during 1956.

I referred in my last Annual Report to difficulties being created by there being no statutory definition when a house is 'unfit' and your experience this year has emphasised the observation made.

#### Overcrowding.

No cases of statutory overcrowding were found during the year.

#### Houses Let in Lodgings.

Three houses are known to be let in lodgings.

#### Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954.

No applications were received during the year for certificates of disrepair under the above-mentioned Act.

It is clearly apparent that little, if any, advantage is being sought by property owners to increase rents under the provision of the above-mentioned Act and there is little evidence that the Act is assisting in obtaining necessary repairs being carried out.

Rather than being an aid to the repair of 'unfit' dwellings as no doubt was intended, the Act appears to have had the opposite effect. By reason of the interpretation the Courts have placed on Section 9 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954 in relation to standards of 'fitness', Section 9 of the Housing Act 1936 (under which so many unfit properties were formerly brought up to a standard of fitness) has almost fallen into abeyance.

In order to remedy an accumulation of small defects which together (but not necessarily individually) render a house unfit by any reasonable standard, use has now to be made of Section 93 of the Public Health Act 1936. This Act is not, however, always applicable nor administratively satisfactory as the action under the Housing Act which was formerly taken.

#### Improvement Grants (Housing Act 1949 and Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954).

No applications were received during the year for grants under the above-mentioned Act and no grants were made.

Although the Council set a very good example by using the Act to improve a row of sub-standard cottages owned by them, it is a pity that the other large property owners in the district have not yet considered it advantageous to take similar action in respect of sub-standard property under their control.

#### Requisitioned Premises.

No houses were held under requisition at the end of the year. Three houses, on which demolition or closing orders had been made, were occupied under licence at the end of the year.

#### New Houses.

Six new houses were provided by private enterprise during the year and

sixteen by the Council. There are now 625 Council houses in the district.

Twenty-eight families were rehoused by the Council during the year. At the end of the year the names of 194 applicants were on the waiting list of whom 58 were living outside the district.

#### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES.

##### 1. Milk.

###### Food & Drugs (Milk & Dairies) Act 1944.

No. of 'dealers' subject to registration by the District Council under regulation 14 of the Milk (Special Designations)(Raw Milk) Regulations 1949 \_\_\_\_\_ 4

No. of 'dealers' subject to licensing under regulation 14 of the Milk (Special Designations) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations 1949 \_\_\_\_\_ 3

No. of 'dairies' in the district subject to registration under regulation 8 of the Milk & Dairies Regulations 1949 \_\_\_\_\_ 3

No. of 'distributors' subject to registration under regulation 8 of the Milk & Dairies Regulations 1949 \_\_\_\_\_ 4

##### Samples.

No. of samples of milk taken and submitted for examination during the year -

|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Tuberculin Tested | 6  |
| Pasteurised       | 49 |
| Undesignated      | 10 |

No. of samples of milk subjected to a guinea pig inoculation test for Tuberculosis \_\_\_\_\_ 9

##### Milk & Dairies Regulations 1949 - Regulation 20.

One biological sample gave a positive result for tuberculosis. The result was passed to the Authority in whose area the affected herd was situated and appropriate action taken by that Authority.

##### 2. Other Food Premises.

The number of food premises in the area, by type of business:-

|                                                     |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----|
| Hotels, restaurants, cafes and boarding houses      | 23 |
| Canteens - School and workplace                     | 6  |
| Confectioners                                       | 8  |
| Meat and Fish                                       | 6  |
| Grocers                                             | 16 |
| Mixed Stores                                        | 3  |
| Boarding Schools and other residential institutions | 5  |
| Food Factories                                      | 5  |
| Stalls                                              | 3  |
| Other                                               | 11 |

No. of above subject to registration under Section 16 of the Food & Drugs Act 1955 in respect of -

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| Ice-cream                 | 28 |
| Sausages & prepared meats | 3  |
| Fish and chips            | 2  |

No. of samples of ice-cream submitted for Methylene  
Blue Test 135 (and 12 Ice-cream lollies)

Forty of the above-mentioned 'food premises' were inspected during the year, 151 inspections being carried out.

Full co-operation was obtained in the enforcement of the Food Hygiene Regulations and no 'exemption certificates' were recommended or granted.

No observations are called for in respect of the Ice-cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations 1947 - 1952 which work satisfactorily in the District.

Byelaws in respect of the Handling and Wrapping of Food etc., are operative in the District.

#### Food Inspection.

##### Butchers' and Other Shops.

No. of inspections during the year 21

Quantities of foodstuffs condemned - 518 lbs.

##### Disposal of Condemned Food.

All food condemned at food shops is disposed of at the refuse tip and meat from the slaughterhouses at a knackers yard.

Slaughterhouses. There are two licensed slaughterhouses in the district.

##### Carcases and Offal Inspected and Condemned.

|                                                                                                                | Cattle<br>Including<br>Cows | Calves | Sheep<br>and<br>Lambs | Pigs  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|-----------------------|-------|
| Number killed                                                                                                  | 860                         | 5,410  | 2,318                 | 1,756 |
| Number inspected                                                                                               | 860                         | 5,410  | 2,318                 | 1,756 |
| <u>All diseases except<br/>Tuberculosis &amp;<br/>Cysticerci:</u>                                              |                             |        |                       |       |
| Whole carcasses<br>condemned                                                                                   | 2                           | 24     | 7                     | 4     |
| Carcases of which<br>some part or organ<br>was condemned                                                       | 174                         | 44     | 138                   | 207   |
| Percentage of the<br>number inspected<br>affected with<br>disease other<br>than tuberculosis<br>and cysticerci | 20.5%                       | 1.2%   | 6.2%                  | 12%   |
| <u>Tuberculosis only:</u>                                                                                      |                             |        |                       |       |
| Whole carcasses<br>condemned                                                                                   | -                           | 1      | -                     | -     |
| Carcases of which<br>some part or organ<br>was condemned                                                       | 47                          | 8      | -                     | 23    |
| Percentage of the<br>number inspected<br>affected with<br>tuberculosis                                         | 5.5%                        | .16%   | -                     | 1.30% |

Carcases and Offal Inspected and Condemned (Continued)

|                                                          | Cattle<br>Including<br>Cows | Calves | Sheep<br>and<br>Lambs | Pigs |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|-----------------------|------|
| <u>Cysticercosis:</u>                                    |                             |        |                       |      |
| Carcases of which<br>some part or organ<br>was condemned | -                           | -      | -                     | -    |
| Carcases submitted<br>to treatment by<br>refrigeration   | 2                           | -      | -                     | -    |
| Generalised and<br>totally condemned                     | 2                           | -      | -                     | -    |

SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT.

|                                               |     |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----|
| Total No. of inspections (under all headings) | 477 |
| Total No. of informal notices served          | 36  |
| Total No. of informal notices complied with   | 27  |
| Total No. of statutory notices served         | Nil |
| Total No. of statutory notices complied with  | Nil |
| Total No. of prosecutions                     | Nil |

E. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.

Other than Tuberculosis -

| <u>Disease.</u>   | <u>Total Cases Notified.</u> |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Measles           | 40                           |
| Scarlet Fever     | 3                            |
| Pneumonia         | 4                            |
| Whooping Cough    | 10                           |
| Puerperal Pyrexia | 4                            |

Tuberculosis -

| <u>New Cases Notified.</u> |                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u>Respiratory.</u>        | <u>Non.Respiratory.</u> |
| 5                          | -                       |

Food Poisoning -

Two cases of suspected food poisoning were notified during the year.

NOEL F. PEARSON.

Medical Officer of Health.





